

## Update from Holly March 2020

But I want you to know, brethren, that the things which happened to me have actually turned out for the furtherance of the gospel. Philippians 1:12

This has been my memory verse this week as I work on memorizing Philippians 1. I have been encouraged as I have meditated on these words. When Paul wrote this, he was in a sense quarantined – he was in prison. But, he wrote encouraging the believers that God was using this situation for the furtherance of the gospel. As I pray for our world and for wisdom as I provide leadership for the ministries I am responsible for here, it has been my prayer that we would allow God to work in and through us and that this would actually turn out for the furtherance of the gospel. May a slower pace allow us to spend precious time cultivating our own relationship with the Lord. But may we also be actively and creatively looking for ways to serve and to share the hope of the gospel with many who are gripped by fear!



Before the virus started changing our plans, we were able to have a board meeting for Choose Life. This was the annual meeting where the directors for each arm of the ministry give their reports from last year and plans and goals for the new year. It was encouraging to see how God has continued to bless and grow this ministry and exciting to think about what the future has for us. I am thankful for our board members who love the ministry and provide great encouragement and challenge us to keep striving to do more. Most of them are also actively involved in the ministry in some way. I will share more in a Choose Life newsletter that I hope to get out soon.

This past week the response to COVID-19 has drastically changed our plans. We had a doctor and his wife scheduled to come for 2 weeks and were making plans to spend a week doing medical clinics in eastern Ukraine. We had to cancel these plans. So far there are only 26 official cases of the disease in Ukraine and none in my city. But, the government has been taking quick action to prevent spread. Last week all schools and universities were shut down. This week they have completed their plan to shut down all our borders to travel except for cargo transport and special flights to help Ukrainians return home. All non-essential businesses have been asked to close and extreme limits have been put on public transportation. There are to be no public gatherings of more than 10 people. In order to comply with restrictions, we have moved our counseling at the Women's Center to phone counseling. One of us will be going in each day to help coordinate that and to dispense our humanitarian aid if needed, but the center is officially closed. As long as they do not restrict private transportation between cities, we will plan to still visit our village clinic sites in order to give medication refills and to see a limited number of patients. While being careful to take measures to protect ourselves and to stay within the government's guidelines, we also do not want to miss opportunities to serve and minister to people during this time when many are filled with fear and uncertainty. Pray that God would give us wisdom and that hearts would be open to seek Him!

Thank you for continuing to pray for Ukraine. Let me know how I can be praying for you as well.

Praying for a furtherance of the gospel,  
Holly Friesen

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**Donation Info:** Gifts can be sent to ABWE, PO Box 8585, Harrisburg PA 17105-8585 or online [www.abwe.org](http://www.abwe.org)

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